CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In the present scenario, every citizen has to play a pivotal role in the upliftment of the nation. A country's prosperity depends on the mental and physical well-being of its people. The aim of education is all-round development of an individual. For this, the children must be educated in such a way that they would develop certain desirable life competencies, attitudes and values among them. It may enrich their intellectual and social skills helpful to lead a purposeful and successful life in this rapidly changing sophisticated society. Our education system has to play a much more active and positive role for promoting growth and development of the students.

The students in the adolescent age group having a variety of needs in physical, psychological, social, educational, vocational and emotional areas. Their needs have to be identified, appreciated, and catered to provide a conducive, peaceful and productive frame of reference for effective learning process. For this, more efforts have to be done towards shaping their personality and for channelizing their energy in a productive way by inculcating proper attitudes and values in them. These socially relevant endeavours can be executed through well-planned and effectively monitored guidance and counseling programmes. Guidance and counseling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development (Okobiah and Okorodudu 2004). Such programmes will enable children to promote co-operative behavior, pursue creative hobbies, cultivate
values and discipline, develop leadership qualities, make proper adjustment to the society, broaden their outlook and ensure a peaceful atmosphere in the institutions.

In today's fast-moving technological world, we are moving towards the age of supercomputers results in an erosion of the child’s ego boundaries and the child is likely to feel disempowered. Their aspiration gets blurred by conflicts and other external forces that may result in immediate cronies. This inevitably leads to the delinquent behaviour and even terrorism and extortion. Emergence of political influence in the school atmosphere also can have a significant impact in the personality of students. Therefore the guidance researcher has to visualize the needs of future generations in facing these unknown realities and suggest ways and methods of developing built-in resources for this purpose.

Around the world, life skills-based programme is being adopted as a means to empower young people in challenging situations. It enables learners to acquire knowledge and to develop attitudes and skills which support the adoption of healthy behaviours. A life skill refers to as problem-solving behaviours appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs. Effective application of life skills can influence the way children feel about others and themselves, which in turn can contribute to the children’s self-confidence and self-esteem. Life skills education promotes mental well-being in young people and equips them to face the realities of life. Consequently, life skills education can be seen as empowering children and thus enabling them to take more responsibility for their actions.

A great need of research is going to be felt in the coming years to understand the personality development of the new generation who are getting increasingly cut off from social contacts and are getting even more familiar with the machines all around them. Personality is a divine gift that forms the foundation of a successful life.
Personality characteristics have long been regarded as biologically based endogenous dispositions that show continuity over time. Central to most personality definitions lies in the assumption that personality remains constant over time. It was thought that personality was set in childhood and adolescence, and became fully crystallized by the age of 30 (Costa & McCrae, 1994). However, more recent studies suggest that developmental change of personality continues to occur during the entire life course (Roberts & DelVecchio, 2000). Hence, in addition to remarkable levels of continuity, research reveals that personality shows important and systematic changes that are meaningfully connected to particular life experiences and contexts.

Reflecting the conceptualization of personality as a developmental phenomenon, many researchers have using longitudinal studies for investigating continuity and change in Personality development among people of all phases of life could be systematically studied, and a number of researchers have since taken a longitudinal view of personality. Whether personality can grow or develop, lies at the heart of the conceptualization of personality. Adolescence is a period of life in which many changes occur, such as attending a new school or having new friendships or romantic relationships. Probably, these changes lead to personality change. Far from being simply encoded in the genes, much of personality is a flexible and dynamic thing that changes over the life span and is shaped by experience (Roberts, Walton, & Viechtbauer, 2006). So Personality development is now become an active area of research, and the idea that personality develops throughout the life-span has become more widely accepted in recent years.

With electronic and video games, even the early contact of children with other children is being threatened. This growth in isolation will have an immense impact on the socialization of the individual and will take distance him from human feelings and
emotions and make him a more mechanically responsive individual. This may be the cause of increasing divorce cases rate of Kerala state. Report of Indian Express (2014) mentioned the survey of divorce cases have been registered since 2005. During 2005 the cases were 8,456, it has increased as 36,187 in 2010 and 56,474 in 2013. This will have serious repercussions on the society. Through guidance and counseling the students enable to understand the importance of value and culture and thus can maintain a good relationship with family members.

The Education Commission, Kothari Commission (1964-66) says that the aims of guidance are both adjustive and developmental, it helps the student in making the best possible adjustments to the situation in the educational institution and in the home and at the same time facilitates the development of all aspects of his personality. The guidance and counselling plays an important role in the development of personality in the learner. Indeed, ‘‘guidance and counselling are increasingly being viewed as proactive support for students’ educational, vocational and personal development, rather than as a remedial solution to problem situations’’ (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998, p. 101). It is integral to the education of process as it aims at skill development, social development, moral and psychological development, career planning and career development.

Guidance and counselling aim at orient individuals to face the ever-changing challenges in today's rapidly-moving technological world. Choice of career or vocation is an important event in the life of an individual. The selection of a wrong vocation can lead to unhappiness, discontent and ultimate failure, because the occupation that the person follows is not merely a means of earning a livelihood. This wrong choice of an occupation not only brings frustration for the growing adult, but a waste of energy, money and precious time. So the vocational choice is an important
event in one’s academic and career pursuit. As explained by Fridley (2006), our chances of making one big intelligent choice at the end of the decision making process are dependent upon the wisdom of the smaller choices we make leading up to that point.

In a fast moving society the question of finding a vocation of one’s choice has become a problem for students and parents. In the past, the question of choice of a vocation did not arise as nearly every caste had its own traditional vocation, which was handed down from generation to generation such as the caste of barbers, cobblers, potters, carpenters, goldsmith, blacksmith etc. derived their caste names and work from their traditional occupation. But today radical changes have taken place in our industries, electronics, business, agriculture, administration education, medicine etc. Now the country needs successful doctors, lawyers, educationists, engineers, technicians, farmers, writers and business executives. So students in the educational institutions are guided to take up course and careers suiting their needs and aspirations, interests, and attitudes, so that they become efficient workers. So essential and reliable information regarding the type of education and training for entry into these jobs, need to be given to students through guidance services in schools. Guidance services enable pupils to know their abilities, interests and aptitudes.

Guidance was organized to prevent the development of problems and its content included educational-vocational-personal-social information not otherwise systematically taught in academic courses. Counselling was seen as growth engendering and prevention and remediation oriented. School guidance was designed to bring learners into contact with the real world in such a way that they are taught life-skills and survival techniques which enable them to direct themselves completely within the educational, personal and social spheres and the world of work.
In the past few years, a number of recommendations have been made to advance the field of guidance and counselling. Guidance implies “the help of personal nature, which is planned to help an individual to solve problems that emerge out in daily life. That is for making choices, adjustments and for solving problems”. Counselling is the interaction between two people where in one member (the counsellor) helps the other (counselee or client) in solving a problem of crucial importance in the life of the counselee not only for immediate benefit, but also for future wellbeing and happiness. Guidance and counselling has been conceptualized as a programme of activities which has provided us with the gateway out of the existing numerous problems in our present age of complex scientific and technological development. The UNESCO module on guidance and counselling (2000a) also posited that Guidance is a programme of services to individuals based on their needs and the influence of environmental factors. Guidance and counselling is a professional field which has a broad range of activities, programmes and services geared toward assisting individuals to understand themselves, their problems, their school environment and their world and also to develop adequate capacity for making wise choices and decisions.

**School Counselling in Kerala State**

In Kerala, the Government has implemented the Kishori Shakti Yogana (KSY), a Centrally Sponsored Scheme introduced by Government of India, (Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of Women and Child Development, New Delhi) for improving the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls and also make them self-confident and equip them to improve their vocational skills.
In Kerala state career guidance programme started in 2002-2003. In 2002, career guidance units were implemented in 50 higher secondary schools in Kerala. It is extended into 1070 schools in 2012. There is an external agency named Souhruda club formed in 2010 aim at solving problems of adolescents especially for girls. As part of this a gynaecologist shall take a class to adolescent girls and also a provision of helping girls to solve their problems individually. There are also programmes for developing personality and enhancing life competencies for all students. In 2010, Souhruda club started in 125 schools and then it extended its activities to 1039 schools. Now it is compulsory to have a career guidance unit or Souhruda club in each higher secondary school. But still there is no chance of ensuring equal access of guidance facilities to all students including boys and girls. Therefore creative models or programmes for the service delivery in the short- and even long-term will have to be developed.

1.2 Need and Significance of the Study

In 21st century the students face several problems that arise because of the explosion of knowledge and the complexity of acquiring that knowledge from the classroom. The employment scenario is also changing from the old traditional employments to the new ones related to IT and such new areas like biotechnology, microbiology etc. Consequently students are very anxious and they confront even unethical problems in the classroom. In order to remove their anxiety and perplexity and create a conducive climate for learning they should be given proper guidance and counselling. The present situation of helping students by guidance and counselling is inadequate.

In the context of the changing socio-cultural scenario the repertoire of guidance and counselling has been increasing at an unexpected speed. The widening
of the spectrum of guidance and counselling demand a new approach to practice in schools, colleges, universities and other institutions in our country. The aims of this study are to enable the students in enriching the perspective, enhancing life competencies and promoting the attitude towards resolving educational, vocational and personal problems. The current system of guidance and counseling is devoid of solving the latest problems that arise from the complexity of social milieu. Even if the classroom practitioners try to provide guidance to students, they are unable to solve all problems that the students confront with. Under these circumstances, the investigator felt the need for devising a new package to overcome such difficulties associated with the present system of guidance and counseling.

Even if studies have conducted in this topic, only rare studies have been spotted on life skills and personality in the Indian, especially Kerala context. The existing strategies for imparting guidance and counseling programmes include seminars, career talk, exhibition etc. The UNESCO suggested certain strategies in its guidelines for developing guidance and counseling programmes. This study is based on the so called guidelines of UNESCO module and the existing guidance and counselling models like Holistic Student centred Model of Guidance (Watts & Van Esbroeck, 1998) and A Model Comprehensive, Developmental Guidance and Counselling Program for Texas Public Schools, A Guide for Program Development Pre-K-12th Grade (2004). The investigator aligned some appropriate strategies based on different studies and attempted to develop a Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package with special focus on Life Skills Attainment, Personality Development and Vocational Choices of Students at Higher Secondary Level. Being a strategically aligned package, makes use of ideas, tenets, concepts and frameworks of different strategies belonging to various counseling models.
1.3 Statement of the Problem

In this rapidly moving complex society, the students are struggling for the better adjustment and existence. If they are not getting proper guidance, they may engage in anti-social activities. The age of these students are sensitive and highly inflammable. They experience conflicts between themselves and the society and even within them. A student at higher secondary level is not mature enough to critically evaluate baffling situations he is continuously faced with. He needs somebody to help him in the solution of problems and thus avoid tensions and conflicts. Indiscipline is a severe problem in our present educational system. There are many social problems that teenagers go through. Consuming drugs, including alcohol and tobacco, continue to be a serious problem for these children. Despite national efforts to eradicate these problems, many students still find their way to these mind altering chemicals. The consensus reached was that Guidance and Counselling should be an integral part of the education of children. Through a well planned guidance and counseling programme, the substance abuse can be controlled among these students.

Selecting an appropriate career is a critical task that faces by adolescents in all societies. The selection of a career made during the senior year is among the most critical decisions in a person's lifetime. This decision has a far-reaching impact on the student's future in terms of lifestyle, status, income, security and job satisfaction. The wrong choice of an occupation results in frustration and serious mental conflicts among people. The career guidance helps students to select an appropriate occupation or education which goes well with their capabilities, skills and interest.

The need for guidance and counselling in modern times has increased because of the multiplicity of problems that the individuals have to face in the various domains of life. Rapid changes in every aspect of living cause many strains and stresses on the
individual. The adolescent children may then inadvertently and unconsciously respond with the problems. They may feel disempowered and overwhelmed by the current system of education. Under these circumstances it becomes essential that the educational institutions should come forward for equipping the children properly by cultivating life skills, moulding personality and promoting capacities to choose right vocation according to their aptitude and interest through an organized programme of guidance and counselling. Unfortunately most of the schools do not have proper counselling facilities in this area. So these children are forced to turn to their peers or other media for support and guidance or they live with their problems.

In this juncture, it is essential to help and guide the youth to worthwhile channels through the introduction of guidance and counseling services on a universal scale in our educational institutions. Even though the guidance and counseling started in our schools and colleges recently, still it is in an infancy stage. Within this context, the investigator put forward the research questions as,

1. How adequate are the physical and operational facilities currently available to deliver effective guidance and counselling services in higher secondary schools?

2. What are the counselling needs of students?

3. How can students at higher secondary level be made to cultivate various life skills through guidance and counseling programme?

4. How can students at higher secondary level be made to develop their personality through guidance and counseling programme?

5. How much the guidance and counseling programmes can help the higher secondary school students for making proper vocational choices?
1.3.1 Analysis of the Problem

Alarming complexity of modern society poses a variety of complicated problems leading to conflicts and frustration that result in serious maladjustment among students. Teachers and social workers try to solve these problems encountered by the students and the society through devising strategies in a haphazard way. But we need a systematic and scientific way of solving student’s problems. This requires a comprehensive study of the needs and problems of students, the drawback of current programmes and the strategies to prevent these problems. So the investigator is contemplating to align various strategies for the improvement of present system of guidance and counseling. Thus the study is entitled as,

DEVELOPING A STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING PACKAGE WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON LIFE SKILLS ATTAINMENT, PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT AND VOCATIONAL CHOICES OF STUDENTS AT HIGHER SECONDARY LEVEL.

1.4 Operational Definition of Key Terms

*Developing*: It refers to become bigger, or organized, to expand or enlarge, to grow larger, fuller or complete.” In the present study the “developing” according to the investigator is “preparing and validating” a Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package with Special Focus on Life Skills Attainment, Personality development and Vocational choices of Students at Higher Secondary Level.

*Strategically Aligned*: Strategy refers to use of skills in achieving a purpose, application of skills in using stratagems. Stratagem is a subtle piece of planning designed to trick or gain an end. Aligned refers to ‘bring into line or into correct position’.
In the present study, ‘strategic alignment’ means the process of bringing the actions of the package into line with the planned goals and objectives of the package. Strategic alignment was embedded more deeply through the articulation of various learning strategies with guidance and counselling.

**Guidance:** Guidance as that part of educational programme which is concerned especially with helping the pupil to become adjusted to his/her present situation and to plan his future in line with his abilities. It is a comprehensive system of functions, services, and programs in schools designed to affect the personal development and psychological competencies of students. As an educational concept, guidance is the sum total of those planned activities for students designed to achieve such developmental or educational outcomes.

**Counselling:** Webster’s dictionary explains “Counselling as consultation” mutual inter-exchange of opinions. “Counselling is the personal and dynamic relationship between two individuals, of whom one is more experienced and wiser who altogether approach a more or less well defined problems of the younger, less experienced and less wise with mutual consideration, for the other, to the end that the problem is more clearly defined and the one who faces the problem is given self direction in the solution of his problems”.

**Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package:** It refers to a collection of various strategies and techniques bring together and specially designed with special focus on certain life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of students at higher secondary level.

**Life Skills Attainment:** "Life skills" are defined as psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life. Life skills Attainment is accomplishment of
competencies which enable a person to face the day to day complex situations successfully and to adapt meaningfully with the environment. Attainment means the “accomplishment or achievement by conscious effort”.

**Personality Development:** Personality development is the development of the organized pattern of behaviors and attitudes that makes a person distinctive. In the present study, it refers to the improvement of attitudes, behavior and character of an individual towards life.

**Vocational choices:** It refers to the selection or preferences of future work or career.

**Students at Higher Secondary level:** Students studying in 11th and 12th standards following Kerala state syllabus.

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses formulates for the study:

1. The prevailing modalities of guidance and counseling are inadequate for enhancing life skills attainment, developing personality and selecting proper vocation of students at higher secondary level.

2. The strategically aligned guidance and counseling package (SAGCP) prepared with special focus on life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices, is an effective programme for students at higher secondary level.

3. The package (SAGCP) is more effective than the existing school programmes of guidance and counseling with regard to attainment of life skills, development of personality and choice of vocation.
4. There exists significant difference in the effectiveness of prevailing mode of guidance and counseling programmes with regard to attainment of life skills, development of personality and choice of vocation of students at higher secondary level.

5. There is no gender difference in the effectiveness of package (SAGCP) with regard to life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices.

6. There exists difference in the effectiveness of SAGCP as a strategy for the guidance and counseling of students opted different subjects.

7. There exists no difference in the effectiveness of SAGCP as a strategy for the guidance and counseling of students belonging to government and aided schools.

8. The package (SAGCP) is equally effective for enhancing all select dimensions of life skills.

9. The package (SAGCP) is equally effective for enhancing all select dimensions of personality development.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are the following:

1. To identify the current strategies adopted for providing guidance and counselling programmes in higher secondary schools of Kerala.

2. To Develop and validate a Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package (SAGCP) with special Focus on life skills.
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attainment, personality development and vocational choices of students at Higher Secondary level.

3. To find out the effect of SAGCP on life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of higher secondary students in the experimental group.

4. To compare the effect of SAGCP on life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of higher secondary students in the experimental group with prevailing groups.

5. To compare the effect of prevailing guidance and counselling programmes conducted by school counsellor with that of the trained classroom practitioner on Life Skills Attainment, personality development and vocational choices of higher secondary students.

6. To find out the gender differences in the effectiveness of package (SAGCP) with regard to life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices.

7. To compare the effect of SAGCP as a strategy for the guidance and counseling with regard to life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of students opted different subjects.

8. To compare the effectiveness of SAGCP as a strategy for the guidance and counseling with regard to life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of students belonging to government and aided schools.

9. To find out the effect of SAGCP on set levels of dimensions of life skills attainment of higher secondary students in the experimental group.
10. To find out the effect of SAGCP on set levels of dimensions of personality development of higher secondary students in the experimental group.

11. To assess feedback from students under experimentation through a Package Appraisal Proforma.

12. To conduct case studies with a purpose of finding out the effect of individual counseling of select higher secondary students.

**1.7 Methodology and Procedure in Brief**

A summary of the procedure adopted for the study is presented in the following sub-sections:

**1.7.1 Method selected**

Mixed methods designs include both quantitative and qualitative approach adopt for the present study. Pretest-posttest non equivalent group design served as the blueprint for the study. Quantitative data will be collected by experiment with the developed package with select higher secondary students of two schools of Kerala state and it will compare with two prevailing groups. Qualitative aspect of the study comprises of semi-structured interview and focus group discussion with school counsellors, principals and teachers of higher secondary schools of Kerala.

**1.7.2 Sample**

For survey, the sample is higher secondary teachers and principals in all the fourteen districts of Kerala state. There were about 98 higher secondary teachers and 16 principals and 10 school counsellors were participated in the study. The samples for the experimental study are the Higher Secondary students from Ernakulam and Kottayam Districts. A total sample of 720 will be participated in the study. The sample also stratified appropriately according to sex, board, and optional subjects.
1.7.3 **Experimental design**: Non-equivalent pretest-post test three group design

1.7.4 **Variables**

In the present study, the effect of Strategically Aligned Guidance & Counselling Package (SAGCP) will be measured by means of the score of the students in the pre and post test.

**Independent Variable**

The variable which is manipulated by the experimenter is called independent variable. In the present study, the Independent variable is the Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package and the prevailing counselling method.

**Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable is the condition or characteristics that appear, disappear or changes as the experimenter introduces, removes or changes independent variable. In the present study, the dependent variable is the *life skill attainment, personality development* and *vocational choices*, of students at Higher Secondary School level.

1.7.5 **Tools of the study**

The investigator will collect the data required for the present study using the following tools:

- Semi-structured interview schedule
- A Strategically Aligned Guidance & Counselling Package (SAGCP)
- Personality Development Index
- Life skills Attainment Scale
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- Vocational Choice Scale
- Package Appraisal Proforma

Statistics used for analysis

The statistical techniques used for the study is t-test, percentage analysis, ANOVA, ANCOVA, Scheff Post Hoch analysis.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The present study is a pioneering attempt in the discipline of Educational psychology to understand the significance of imparting guidance and counseling for enhancing life competencies of students. The main objective of the investigation was to develop and validate a Strategically Aligned Guidance and Counselling Package (SAGCP) with special focus on life skills attainment, personality development and vocational choices of students at higher secondary level. This study emphasizes an urgent need of providing guidance and counselling for students at higher secondary level. The study also stresses the significance of a unified policy for imparting guidance and counseling to students at higher secondary level in all schools of Kerala. The guidance and counselling package can be much useful for providing instruction to teachers and also helpful for educators and curriculum framers to include these strategies and techniques for imparting guidance and counselling for students at higher secondary level. It is hoped that the result of the present study would help to find new frontiers of research to educational practice.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

Some limitations have crept into the study in spite of genuine efforts to make the study objective and precise as possibilities. The limitations are:-
1. Due to lack of availability of time the experiment was conducted only in two Higher Secondary Schools in Kottayam and Ernakulam district.

2. Students at Higher secondary level include students studying in all optional subjects of plus one and plus two classes. Due to un-availability of adequate time the study was confined to students of three optional groups of standard XI.

3. For the smooth and effective implementation of SAGCP the essential life skills was limited to five in the study.

4. The personality is a broad concept it was impossible to include all the aspects of personality, the personality development confined to development in six areas.

In spite of all these limitations it is hoped that the findings of the present study would throw a light on the area of guidance and counseling.

1.10 Overview of the Thesis

The thesis comprises of six chapters including the introduction.

**Chapter one** is a background on guidance and counselling in higher secondary level and sets the focus and boundaries of the study. The introductory chapter is the overall indicator such as the background, need and significance, hypotheses, objectives, operational definition of the key terms, procedure, scope and delimitation of the study.

**Chapter two** is the theoretical framework that develops the fundamental principles that underlie the study as well as a background on education with special reference to Life skills attainment, Personality development and vocational choices. The aim of
this chapter is to link the background of the study and the topic of study, guidance and counselling, with the research methodology.

**Chapter three** enumerates the review of related literature pertaining to the present study.

In *Chapter four*, the nature of inquiry is investigated as well as the research process to describe how the study was carried out.

**Chapter five** explains the analysis of data and findings of the research and highlights the case studies done with three higher secondary students. It also provides the tenability of hypotheses and discussion of the study in the light of the findings.

**The Chapter six** provides conclusions, summary, recommendations, suggestions and implications of the study and it is followed by bibliography and appendices.